Office - Supreme Court, U.S.
FILED
JUN 14 1983
ALEXANDER L. STEVAS,
CLERK

No. 82-1906

IN THE

Supreme Court of the United States

OCTOBER TERM, 1983

LACLEDE GAS COMPANY,

Petitioner,

v.

OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC COUNSEL OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI,

Respondent.

RESPONSE OF RESPONDENT PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI SUPPORTING PETITION OF LACLEDE GAS COMPANY FOR A WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI

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Respondent Public Service Commission of the State of Missouri (Missouri Commission) received the Petition for Writ of Certiorari of Petitioner Laclede Gas Company (Laclede) on May 25, 1983. Pursuant to U.S. Supreme Court Rule 19.6 the Missouri Commission hereby responds in support of Petitioner.

The Missouri Commission supports Laclede's Petition for Writ of Certiorari in all respects.

The question presented is an issue of great importance and interest to all citizens of the State of Missouri. The Missouri Commission regulates the business of all public utilities and rail and motor common carriers in the State,

often in regulatory proceedings involving multiple parties. To do so effectively and efficiently the Missouri Commission must have the authority to structure its proceedings in a manner most conducive to the efficient, reasonable and lawful disposition of non-unanimous settlement agreements.

The decision below erroneously interprets the Fourteenth Amendment to deprive the Missouri Commission of a procedural tool which does no more than allow for efficient and expeditious resolution of certain cases before it in a manner which promotes the public interest, and does no less than allow all parties a meaningful opportunity to be heard with all Fourteenth Amendment rights to due process preserved.

Respectfully submitted,

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